

The Life of a Dungeness Crab.....



Did you know.....

- That the Dungeness crab was named after a small fishing village on the Strait of Juan de Fuca in Washington state?
- That Dungeness crabs have been harvested commercially along the Pacific Coast since the late 1880's?
- In just the first two months of the 2004 season, harvesters brought in nearly 21million pounds of Dungeness crab - eclipsing the old mark of 18.2 million pounds recorded during 1979-80?



Then.....



And now!



In 3-4 years, the crabs are large enough to harvest.

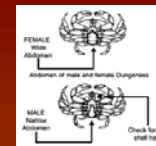


Megalopa come back to near shore waters and can be seen in the boat basin from April-June. They soon molt into juveniles which closely resemble adult crabs. They are about the size of your pinky fingernail.

Spring - Summer



Dungeness megalopa - the last larval stage.



Male and female crabs mate while the females are "soft".

Summer - Fall



The female fertilizes and extrudes her eggs.

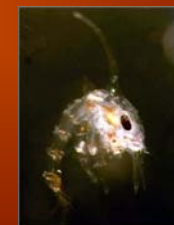
Fall-Winter



Dungeness crab embryo

Winter - Spring

The developing embryos hatch out off-shore as a tiny free swimming larval form called a zoea.



Microscopic Dungeness crab zoea

The life cycle of the Dungeness Crab (*Cancer magister*)

Begin here!